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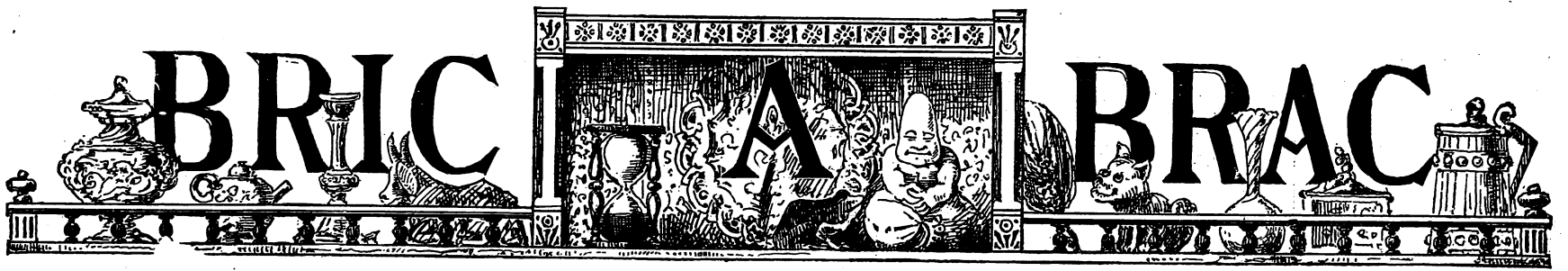
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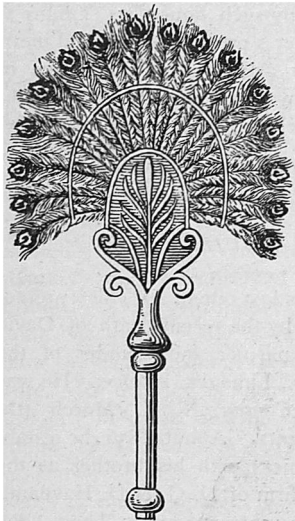
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# A TALK ABOUT FANS.



ETRUSCAN FAN.

IT would be a difficult task to follow back the history of the fan to its origin. Jenyns, the poet, in his idyl on the fan, ascribes its invention to the Arcadians; but this is a mere poetical fiction, and the fan is evidently as old as the earliest vestiges of civilization. Leaves were naturally first used to agitate the air, and Nature has gifted the regions where fans were the most necessary with such plants as the lotos, the palm, the banana, and many

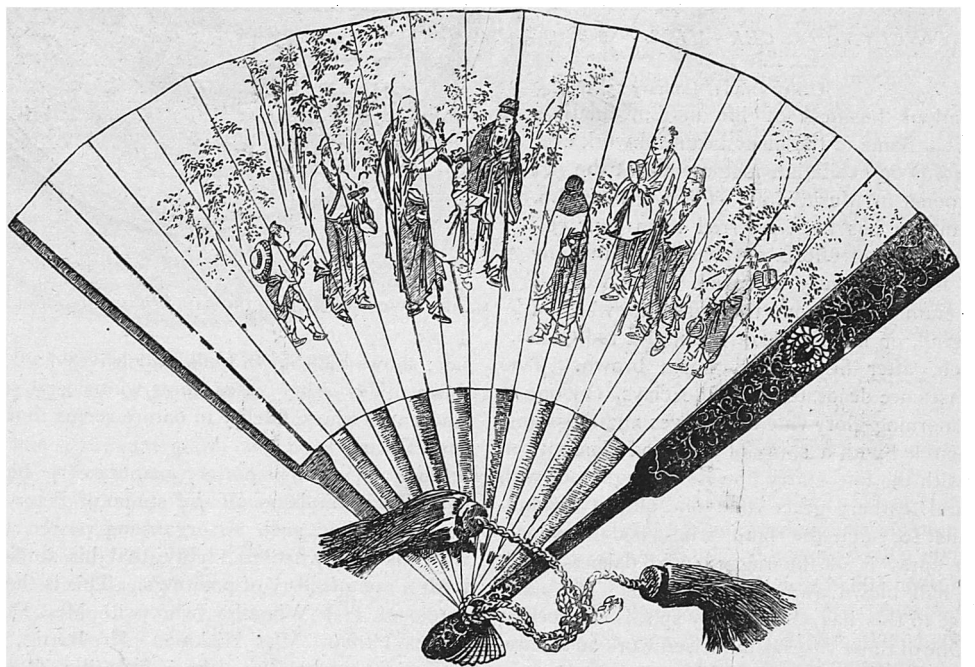
others, the leaves of which make an excellent substitute for the more ornamental and elaborate article which nevertheless soon makes its appearance in the early records of the history of the world. In ancient India and Persia fans were used in sacred rites. The Sanscrit poets of antiquity describe them, and Indian ruins show the forms used, and some of their ornaments. In one of the singular poetical effusions of the early Persian writers an author relates that King Nila had an extremely beautiful daughter whose duty it was constantly to keep up the sacred fire so as to increase her father's prosperity. She used her fan to animate the flame, but it never burned so well as when she would blow on it through her delicate lips, for, says the poet, "The celestial fire had fallen in love with this young girl so admirable to see."

The bass-reliefs found in the ruins of Nineveh indicate in many places the use of fans, and in one found at Koyoundjik we even see the swinging fan attached to the ceiling. Among the Egyptians, the fan-bearer was an important personage, and the fan itself became a sort of banner or standard for its owner, and played no unimportant part in battles and conflicts. In Greece it was considered rather as an article of luxury, and its

fans of that period (350 B.C.) seem not to be real leaves, but only made in the same shape.

The fan made of feathers was much in vogue in antiquity, and we give a picture of an Etruscan fan which is shown on one of the vases in the Museum of the Louvre. Under the name of "flabellum," it was introduced into Rome, and there again it formed one of the articles assigned to women. Yet in the theatres, and at the public baths, men were sometimes fanned by a slave known as "flabellifer."

The folding fan, such as is in general use now, originated in Japan, and is said to have been suggested by the wing of the bat. It was soon adopted by the Chinese, and thence found its way to Europe. In Japan and China the fan played an important part in court etiquette; and in private life it denoted the rank and social position of the man who carried it. Our illustration represents a Japanese fan used by the general of an army. The lacquered fans which came from China had a great influence on the fan-makers in



JAPANESE GENERAL'S FAN.

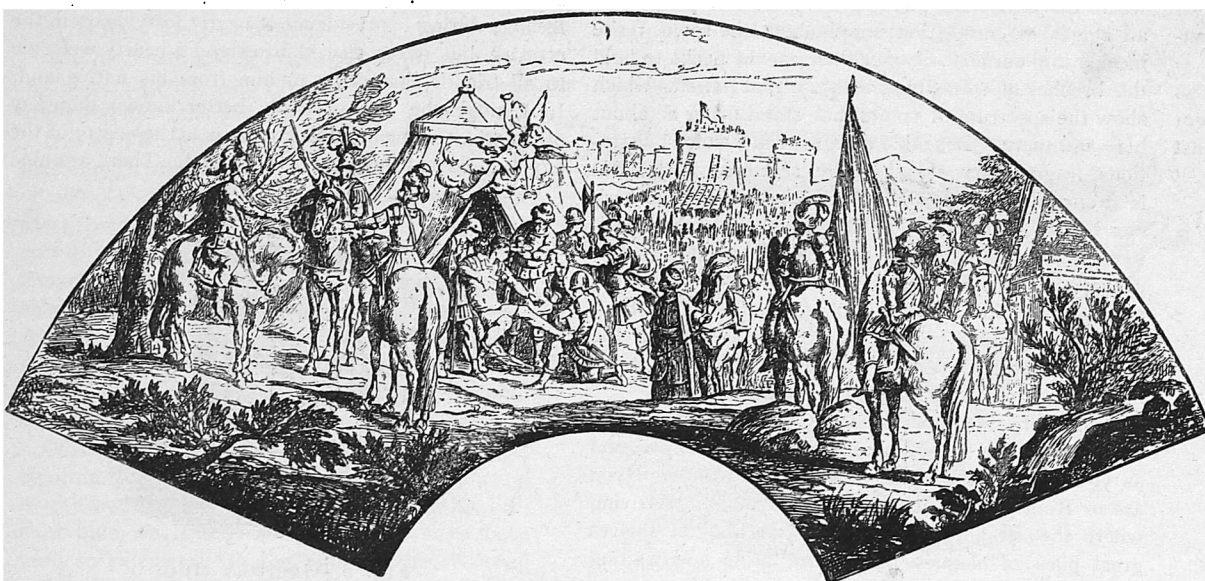
When Christianity became established, the fan was used in the sacred rites, and the celebrant of the mass was fanned by two assistants during a part of the service, to keep him cool and prevent flies or other insects from touching the host or the chalice. The fan in Roman Catholic countries was so closely associated with the church that it was only in the early part of the twelfth century that women began to use it again. In the middle of the fifteenth century the Spaniards used large round fans, a fashion which soon spread to France

France during the reign of Louis XV., and a coach-painter named Martin discovered a very fine varnish which would fix on ivory even the lightest water-colors. The name of Vernis-Martin was given to the varnish, and fans painted or even varnished by him are much sought after by collectors. Mother-of-pearl, ivory, tortoise-shell, and metal were used after the sixteenth century for fan mountings. Fans were often ornamented in those days with small looking-glasses, eye-glasses, and even diminutive spy-glasses inserted where the pin holds the ends of the leaves together. Others had secret receptacles for letters. During the French Revolution fans were used as political emblems.

The fan (illustrated herewith) which belonged to Ninon de l'Enclos was made during the reign of Louis XIV., and was given to her by Saint Evremond as a token of friendship, this fact being recorded by an inscription on the back. The sticks are of tortoise-shell, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and the painting represents an episode of the "Jerusalem Delivered" of Tasso, where Godefroy de Bouillon is miraculously cured of a wound. It is now in the collection of the Comtesse de Chambrun.

Celebrated artists of all periods have painted fans, and among those of the present day none perhaps with more success than Hamon. The peculiarly poetical style of his compositions, and the grayish tone of coloring he is so fond of, are well suited to fan-painting. One of our illustrations shows, besides other graceful figures, a cupid who is shooting arrows out of a catapult made on purpose.

The figures in the sketch of the "see-saw" are well grouped, and the design may be of use to any of our readers who wish to try their hand on this style of work. To paint fans on silk, water-colors ought to be used, mixed with a little alum if necessary. Care should be taken to employ only washes of transparent colors, for if body-color is used, which is often the case, the painting will crack and wear off where the silk bends to allow the fan to close.



FAN PRESENTED TO NINON DE L'ENCLOS.

use was generally restricted to women. The lotos leaf shape was the favorite, and many decorated vases and statuettes show us that maidens in those ancient times were quite as expert as they are now in the handling of that sceptre of coquetry. In those charming figurines found at Tanagra, in Boeotia, which was so celebrated for the beauty of its women, we find fans in the hands of nearly all the little statues that represent with such vivacity the bewitching Tanagra blondes. Many of the

and England. With the period of the Renaissance, the luxury of ornamentation, which reached all objects of personal attire, did not omit the fan, and some fine specimens of work by the most celebrated gold and silversmiths of the period are still in existence. Queen Elizabeth did more than any other sovereign in England to popularize the fan, and established the rule, followed to this day, that a fan is the only present a queen can accept from a subject.

This article may be very well supplemented by some curious details gleaned from a recent entertaining article in *The Queen*. In France, it is said we meet with the first satirical fan in Mme. du Barri's time. The ornamentation of the leaf is in the ordinary style of the period—a figure medallion in the centre, cupids on clouds, with flowers above; but, when closed, the fan assumes the shape of a washerwoman's beetle, in allusion to the Marquise's descent.

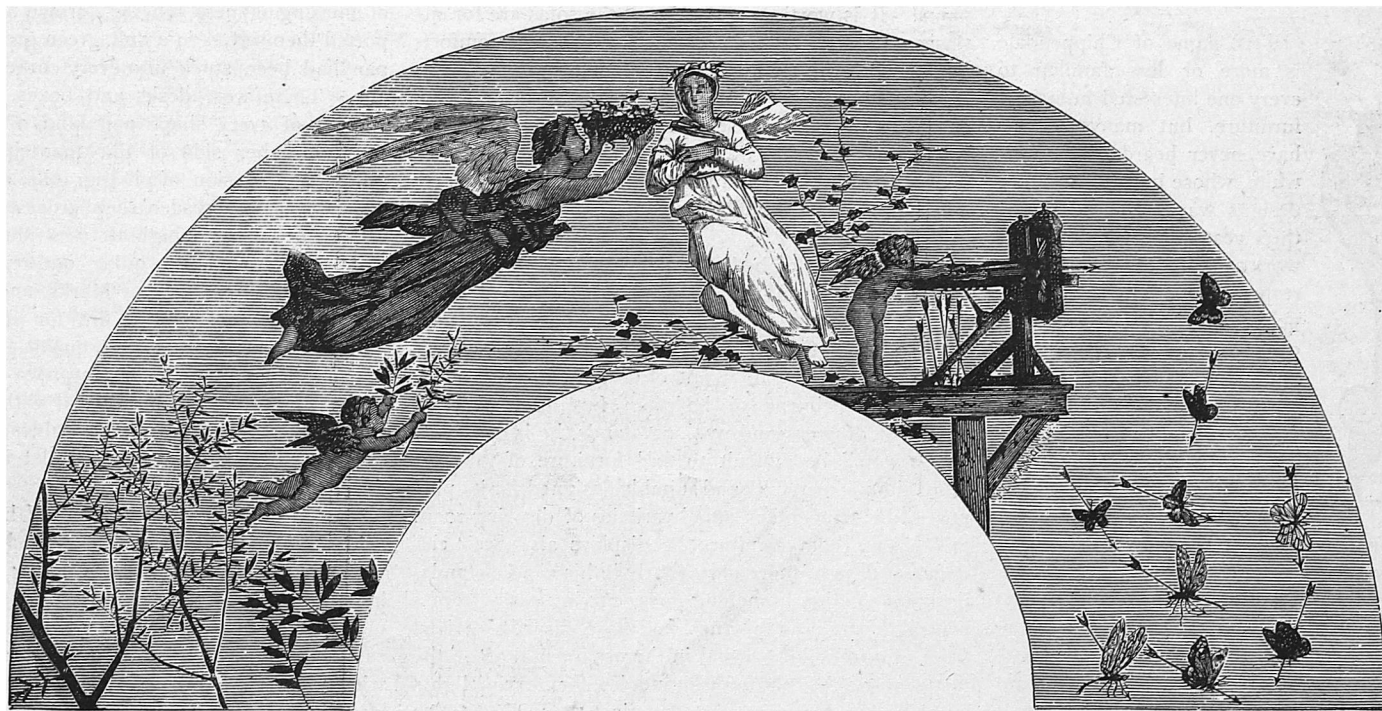
Preceding the Revolution court scenes and royal

in the centre an oval medallion printed on red, and set round with eight portraits of Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and the royal family. Above the colored medallion is the word "Jehovah" in Hebrew letters, with triangle, circle, and glory, and on the side a printed copy of the king's will, dated from the Temple, December 25th, 1792. The whole is surmounted in large letters with the words "Testament de Louis XVI., né le 23 Août, 1754, mort le 21 Janvier, 1793."

A curious example of hatred of royalty occurs on a

the deeds and the death of the Duke of Marlborough supply copious subjects for facetious fan decoration. Addison and Steele, Congreve and Gay, celebrated the fans of their period, and many of the scenes of Hogarth's "Progresses" and the "Marriage à la Mode" were pirated for fan paintings.

In 1753 a correspondent of *The Gentleman's Magazine* enumerates the subjects which were then popular for the embellishment of fans, among them the stories of Darby and Joan, Harlequin and Columbine, the Taking



ALLEGORICAL FAN DESIGN BY HAMON.

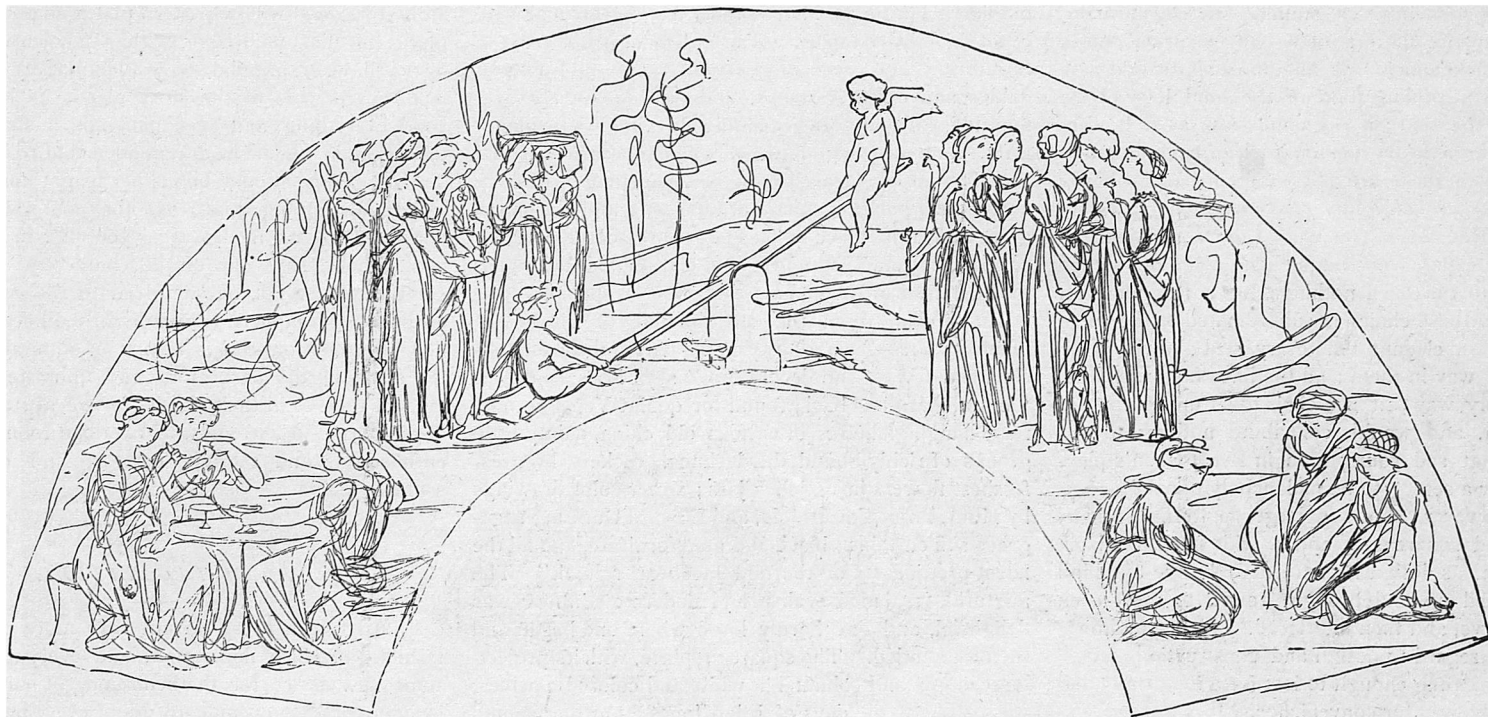
portraits seem to have been favorite subjects for commemorative fans—the marriage of Louis XIV., and the portraits of Marie Leczinska, queen of Louis XV., of Prince Condé, Comte Artois, of Louis XVI., associated with Necker, prominent among them. During the Revolution commemorative fans were all the vogue. Allusions on fan leaves to the stirring events and prominent characters of the period are very numerous. The taking of the Bastille and incidents connected therewith, Republican festivals liberally adorned with the emblems

fan representing a court reception, with figures in full dress, of the time of Louis XV. The centre figure, probably of the king sitting on the throne, is cut out, with a corresponding reduction of the number of sticks. Fan-leaves of a more commonplace character, apparently belonging to the same period, commemorate favorite singers and their songs, like "Romance de Nina, chantée par Mme. Dugazon," "La Reconnaissance de Figaro."

In Napoleonic times the spirit of facetious fan painters

of Portobello, the Humors of Change Alley, and several others. There are also references to printed fans on the subjects of Carteret's Motion against Walpole (1741), and of the Excise Agitation (1732), and also respecting fans with songs from the "Beggar's Opera," in Wright's Caricature History of England. In the "Life of Wolfe" it is mentioned that fans were printed with the "Taking of Quebec."

A most curious example described by George Augustus Sala was exhibited some twenty years ago at a congress



FAN DESIGN BY HAMON—"THE SEE-SAW."

and mottoes of "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité," "Unity and Equality," with tricolor ribbons, flags, and revolutionary couplets, medley crowds dancing and walking in the costumes of the Terror period, form favorite subjects for fan prints. Portrait medallions of Montagnard and Girondist leaders, supported by figures of Fame and Liberty, and with verses in their honor, were placed on fans used perhaps to cool the deadly atmosphere of revolutionary tribunals.

The Royalists, in return, sported fans with allusions to the king's dismal fate. One among them shows

appears to have been nipped by the severity of events. The highest flight they take terminates in the portrait of the great warrior, who probably did not like to have his victories trifled with on paltry fans.

When we turn to England, the number of commemorative and subject fans, more or less eccentric, seems to have been even greater than in France. The reign of Queen Anne, when fans were made so large that Sir Roger de Coverley declared he would allow the widow he courted "the profits of a windmill for her fans," is tolerably rich in examples of both kinds; and especially

of the Archæological Institute, held at Worcester, referring either to the great lottery of 1714, or the equally memorable gambling enterprise of 1718. The scene depicted was the interior of Mercers' Hall, Ironmongerlane, Cheapside, with a view of a platform with side-galleries, containing a crowd of gay gallants and fashionable dames in the full costume of the period. The lottery tickets were in the course of being drawn by Blue-coat boys, on one side being a wheel for blanks, and on the other for prizes. At a later period (1788) the trial of Warren Hastings was illustrated on fans. CURIO.